

John & Rachel Hall of Bridge End farm, near Keld

Rachel Hall: 'It's called the 'hog house', we always used to call it t'hog house on Slack Gill Allotment. As a child I remember, that was in the days we wintered our hogs at home, whereas now they go away to lowland farms for winter and I'd say there'd probably be 120 or so in there and they'd be free to run in and out and the old fashioned hayracks round the side with a little wooden trough at the bottom for the [sheep] cake. I remember in 1963 was this particularly bad storm and we needed to get some feed up there to them and I remember dad carrying a bale of hay. Must've been bought hay 'cos at that time we'd still not have a baler, so it'd be bought hay, he would carry the bale, and I remember me mother would carry half bag of cake, sheep cake, feed, and me carrying, because I was only five, a little bit in the bottom of a feed bag and off we trudged through the snow, walking all the way up to the hog house, to feed the hogs. It was all hands on deck and at the time I remember school was closed and there was snow right to the wall tops and walking along the tops of the walls with my friends just because [laughs] you could.'

'They used to run in and out of the building, it was a low building with a door at each end of the front, and also it was fenced, we sometimes fenced a little bit, so they got used to not going too far, and then, down to the little gill where they could get their water.'

'There was like an old ladder, so you could actually take your hay up beforehand, and stack your hay on the rafters above...and put it up and leave it. 'Cos I remember, like, in my teens, that was my job on a weekend when I was at school, I used to walk up and I'd have to get a stick or something and poke the bales down . . . so I could feed them.'

'As this was an allotment so the hay would have had to be taken there...by tractor probably early in those days, but previous to that it would be with the horse and cart.'

'Up past Beck Meetings, up that gill up Crook Sike there's a very small building, you can't even see it, what's it called?' John Hall: "Blue John Holes" "Oh yes, Blue John Holes...be worth a photograph" John Hall: "Roof's caved in" "Oh...well, I remember keeping hay in there [for the sheep on the moor]'

Blue John Holes are west of Beck Meetings just off B6270 near the Cumbria boundary

(Adapted from the 12th January 2017 interview transcriptions from the Every Barn Tells a Story project by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority)